

Baltimore
Sun

August 9, 1976

Editor
Baltimore Sun
1214 National Press Bldg.
Washington, D. C. 20004

Dear Sir:

Your lead editorial in *The Sun* of August 6 demands comment.

It is not my purpose to extend discussion, if that is the word, of factual matters covered by the Commission on Central Intelligence Agency Activities within the United States, (Rockefeller Commission), and by the extensive studies and findings of the Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations. Hundreds of pages of testimony and conclusions are available to those who wish to distinguish between evidence and suspicion, between reality and allegation, between malfeasance and sensationalism.

As a result of the Senate Select Committee proceedings, the Congress has taken steps to enhance its capacity for detailed and comprehensive oversight of the national foreign intelligence community. Executive Order 11905 of the President provides detailed directives for the conduct of foreign intelligence activities. Thus, there is no question that the Central Intelligence Agency and other components of the intelligence community are responsive to the direction of the elected Chief Executive and fully accountable to the elected representatives in Congress.

I do not presume to comment on your editorial views. I find it necessary, however, to state that the accusations of developing techniques for "curbing domestic dissent and securing ideological conformity" are shocking, offensive, and objectionable. Eternal vigilance of the free press

as a safeguard of our freedom is one thing; unfounded imputation to the Government of monstrous motives and criminal designs on a national scale is quite another. Responsible editorial opinion can hardly go too far in the exercise of the former; it is recklessly at odds with the fundamental concepts of liberty when it indulges in the latter.

I trust you will lend the ~~courtesy~~ of your pages to these remarks.



Assistant to the Director
of Central Intelligence

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Tip of a CIA Iceberg

Revelations about the CIA's use of extremely dangerous hallucinogenic drugs—most of them even now classified as experimental—on unwitting and unwilling subjects in the 1950s and 1960s is frightening enough. What is even more frightening is the probability that this drug research was no more than the tip of an iceberg of CIA activity that proceeded apace despite its self-evident potential for compromising academic social science research in the United States.

What prompted the recent freedom-of-information suit that secured the CIA files was the earlier Rockefeller commission report on the CIA, which described the drug programs briefly and then mentioned, almost casually, that these programs were but a small part of a much broader program of "controlling human behavior." Indeed that seems to have been the case. The newly released files indicate that the CIA used a variety of front organizations to finance academic social scientists, and thus was involved in a far broader range of psychologically oriented research than just drugs, from electroshock to psychological assessments of subjects who were unaware they were being assessed. According to a spokesman for the Center for National Security, which brought the suit, "some of the biggest names in academic social science research were involved, usually un-

knowingly" through grants from the CIA front organizations.

It is probably safe to say that most of these researchers pursued their work with the hope of helping humanity. But although the CIA says its main interest was defensive, to counter psychological techniques it feared the Russians were developing, there is no doubt that the techniques also had, and have, frightening potentials for curbing domestic dissent and securing ideological conformity. The range of drugs tried, from aphrodisiacs to "truth serums" and what the agency called "recruitment pills," suggests the vicious potential. The agency's unscrupulous use of the techniques on unsuspecting and involuntary subjects leaves little room for confidence that the agency's ethical standards would forever have prevented use of the techniques on the general population for political purposes.

Details apparently will be scarce. Hard as it is to believe, in 1973, the then CIA director, Richard M. Helms, ordered many records of the psychological programs destroyed. Mr. Helms's order deserves to be added promptly to the already-burdensome agenda of the Senate's new intelligence committee. The nation is entitled to as full an accounting as can possibly be assembled—not only of the programs themselves but of the destruction of the files as well.